

# Migration, Islam and Masculinities: Transforming Emigration and Immigration Societies

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## “Challenging men!”

In work with Turkish/Arabic boys, within migrant communities with specific ethic, ethnic and social rules and a so called low income and low standard of education, I experienced a kind of “Migrant-Masculinity”.

Usually these patterns of behavior are influenced by feudalistic-patriarchal social structures from which their parents come from. These pictures though, don't match the ideal of the “New Man”, which is more and more prominent in the Western European culture.

Considering the fact that most of the young migrants are being born in Germany, begs the question why they could not integrate into the system of values and rules of the majority society.

Faced with such a social context these young men revert to traditional gender roles, religion and nationality, to shape their identity, which is not grown and stabile. So they feel let down by both cultures. It is our task to restore their confidence in the society they live in.

To shake up these traditional notions of manliness, we need to make them aware of their emotional and physical needs. They need masculine role models, who give them confidence and who they can trust. Men who tell them, that they belong to a new culture, which is needed in society, supporting them in forging their own identity, given prevailing negative stereotypes.

At the same time, it is our task to demand that they are given access to all levels of society, for example equal opportunities in employment.

We must also make the majority society aware of, that the bi-cultural socialisation of these boys is to be seen as a potential for society, rather than an obstacle.